Perdue Gift

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A food processing giant, with a facility in South Central Kentucky, has jump started a major gift to the Food Processing and Technology program at WKU-Owensboro.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham tells us how nearly 200 thousand dollars will provide a huge boost to the growing program.

A 50-thousand dollar grant from the Arthur W. Perdue Foundation has more than tripled thanks to matching money from WKU and the Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation.

It will put WKU-O students on the cutting edge of food technology research.

 “This is very exciting because we are starting everything from scratch.”

Dr. Chandra Emani is the first WKU faculty member in the new satellite campus at Owensboro’s Center for Research and Development.

 “These labs went from ground up giving me the perspective of developing the research at the undergraduate level and slowly bridging onto Masters level.”

Thanks to a grant initiated by Perdue, Emani will soon be joined by Professor John Khouryieh when a second lab dedicated to food analysis is installed.

 “There is equipment they need and this 50-thousand will certainly help purchase that equipment.”

A fat analyzer and a protein analyzer will be purchased to determine fat and protein content in raw and processed meat.

 “It’s important when you can have world class research collaborate with entrepreneurs to communicate ideas. That’s what this facility is all about.”

This facility, located on Allen Street in Owensboro, will also include 32-hundred square feet of bio safety laboratories for start up companies.

 “It’s a very focused strategy on several different clusters that we already have in the Daviess County area.”

In 2008 WKU-O established the Food Processing and Technology Program in response to the needs of the food processing industry. Now the third largest poultry company in the U.S. has made a response of it’s own.

 “The family believes very strongly in giving back to the community and focusing on needs of the community and helping out as much as they can.”

The second food lab is expected to be up and running by next semester. The food processing industry is the largest industry in the United States.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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